

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		NUMBER: 9500-011
SUBJECT: Coordination of Environmental Policy	DATE: June 30. 2005	
	OPI: Natural Resources Conservation Service	

1 **PURPOSE**

A primary mission of the Department of Agriculture is to assist farmers in improving agricultural production while at the same time conserving our natural resources and protecting and improving the quality of the environment. Successful accomplishment of this mission requires the development of clear USDA policies on environmental issues and the coordinated implementation of programs to carry out those policies. The purpose of this regulation is to establish the necessary mechanisms to ensure effective policy and program coordination regarding all environmental matters including pesticides.

2 **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Departmental Regulation 9500-011, April 20, 1994, is canceled and is replaced by this regulation.

3 **ESTABLISHMENT**

There is hereby re-established the Agricultural Council on Environmental Quality (Council) which shall be responsible for coordination of all environmental policies and programs of the Department. Membership of the Council shall include the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, the Under Secretary for Rural Development, the Assistant Secretary for Administration, the Chief Economist, and the Director of the Office of Agricultural Environmental Quality, if the Secretary has appointed one. The Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment is hereby designated as Chairman of the Council.

4 STAFF SUPPORT

The Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment shall designate a person to serve as Director of the Council who shall provide staff support to the Council in promoting strong and effective intradepartmental coordination on environmental policy issues, improving policy formulation on environmental issues, and providing a focal point for USDA interaction on environmental issues with other federal agencies and external organizations. Additional staff support may be provided to the Council, as necessary, by appropriate USDA agencies and offices.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

The provisions of this regulation shall be effective immediately.